<u>**Amendments to the Claims:**</u>

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

<u>**Listing of Claims:**</u>

Claim 1 (currently amended): A communication link protocol for communicating between <u>a local node and a remote node</u> ~~nodes~~ of an interconnect system via communication links, the communication link protocol comprising:

> a direct memory access (DMA) write command for performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from [[a]] <u>the</u> local node to [[a]] <u>the</u> remote node via one of the communication links;

> an administrative write command for writing data from [[a]] <u>the</u> local node to registers in [[a]] <u>the</u> remote node via one of the communication links for administrative purposes;

> a memory copy write command for ~~mirroring a write to a local node to a remote nodes by writing~~ <u>copying</u> an entire line of memory from the local node to a <u>corresponding</u> line of memory at the remote node via one of the communication links ~~when~~ <u>after</u> a new data is written into the line of memory at the local node even when the new data is smaller than the line of memory at the local node; and

> a built in self test (BIST) command for testing the functionality of one of the communication links.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1 wherein each command is conveyed between [[a]] <u>the</u> local node and [[a]] <u>the</u> remote node in the form of a respective command packet.

Claim 3 (original): The communication link protocol of Claim 2 wherein each respective command packet carries information for at least one command flag.

Claim 4 to 9 (canceled).

Claim 10 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein said performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from [[a]] <u>the</u> local node to [[a]]

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the remote node comprises copying the block of data from a local memory of the local node to a remote memory of the remote node.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein said performing an inter-node DMA transfer of a block of data directly from [[a]] the local node to [[a]] the remote node comprises computing parity over multiple blocks of data from a local memory of the local node and writing the parity to a remote memory of the remote node in a single operation.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The communication link protocol of Claim 1, wherein the memory copy write command comprises: ~~said mirroring a write to a local node comprises:~~

    reading existing data from the line of memory in a local memory of the local node;

    merging the new data with the existing data so the new data replaces at least some existing data while other existing data remains;

    writing merged data to the line of memory in the local memory of the local node;

    transferring the merged data via one of the communication links to the remote node; and

    writing the merged data to [[a]] the corresponding line of memory in a remote memory of the remote node.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The communication link protocol of Claim 12, wherein said writing the merged data to the corresponding line of memory in a remote memory of the remote node comprises writing the remote node using a same address offset of the line of memory at the local memory of the local node.